

The London Obstetrical Society passed 104 candidates at the January examination for their Diploma in midwifery. One wonders how all these ladies will find employment.

A SPECIAL meeting of the Council of the Charity Organisation Society, held last Monday, was attended by a number of persons interested in Hospital Management, and Colonel Montefiore read a paper on "The Need of a Central Hospital Board for London," with especial reference to the promotion of uniformity in the system of admission into hospitals. He pointed out that the Select Committee of the House of Lords recommended the formation of a Central Board in 1892, but that until the present time the idea had been allowed to lapse. He showed that there was a great need for an advisory body, not only to assist hospitals but also to advise the charitable who desired to contribute to such institutions. But at the same time he recognised that each hospital must be, as now, autonomous, and be controlled and maintained by its own Committee and subscribers. He believed that a Central Board, however, would exercise a valuable moral influence, and would be able to prevent abuses, or at any rate, to introduce necessary reforms. The signs of the times pointed to rate-supported hospitals, and as a firm supporter of the voluntary system he, therefore, advocated that the medical charities should be organised as soon as possible under a Central Board which would enjoy the full confidence and support of the public. An animated discussion followed the reading of the paper, and strong opinions were expressed against the system of charitable institutions admitting paying patients, or making out-patients pay for the advice they obtained, and in general agreement with the idea of a Central Board.

THE Annual Meeting of the Central Poor Law Conference was held in the Council Chamber of the Guildhall, last Tuesday and Wednesday, under the Presidency of Mr. Albert Pell. On the first day, papers were read on "Inequalities in Assessment and Rating," by Mr. E. J. Castle, Q.C., and on "The Control of Pauper Children," by Miss Grafton. On Wednesday, the papers comprised one on "Vagrancy," by Mr. J. Whittaker, J.P., and two on "Nursing in Workhouses and Workhouse Infirmaries," by Miss Gibson, of the Birmingham Workhouse Infirmary, and Mr. Jackson Hunt, Chairman of the Marylebone Board of Guardians. We hope to deal with these latter at some length in these columns, next week.



### Our Country Letter.

WHAT a sleepy place is a hospital on Sunday; what a change from the busy stir and cheerful activity of the work-a-day week. As I entered the gate of the Royal Isle of Wight Infirmary on a Sunday late in autumn, I half hesitated as to whether it was fair to touch the bell and disturb the quiet rest of the seventh day.

The somewhat wintry atmosphere, lightened by a few bright gleams of sun which rested sympathetically on a few decorative chrysanthemums in the front garden, was sufficiently chilly to overcome my scruples, and with a mental vision of a bright cheerful fire and a cup of tea, I "pressed the button" and inquired for the Matron. She was at that minute crossing the hall, and, with pleasant welcome, led the way to her sitting-room. Miss Fitzpatrick, who hails originally from Manchester and Bachs, has been the Matron at the Ryde County Hospital for some seven years. She is an enthusiastic member of the General Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and has done much since she has held the present position to raise the standard of Nursing.

A brief glance at the wards reveals that the system by which such order and perfection of detail is accomplished must indeed be a good one, and it is easy to see that the watchwords of the little hospital are friendliness and good fellowship.

As we walk through the wards we are accompanied by "Bruno," a terrier who is one of the traditions of the hospital. He has been bequeathed from a remote past as a perpetual legacy—that is to say, for the natural course of his life. "Bruno's" views are somewhat autocratic in that he regards the House Surgeon's sitting room as belonging by priority to him. House Surgeons may come and House Surgeons may go, but with each and every one "Bruno" disputes and maintains his right to make their room his headquarters.

We enter one ward which is temporarily set apart for typhoid cases from neighbouring Newport, and the first point that strikes me is the perfect ventilation of this and all the wards. My professional eye notes the Tobin's tubes and air gratings on every hand. And then I am enlightened that the ventilation, as well as all the other sanitary matters connected with the hospital, are under the watchful care of Dr. Davey, who is so well known through the island as an earnest hygienist. Dr. Davey, too, is keenly interested in nursing, is on the Executive of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and always finds time in his busy life to lecture to and to conduct "grinds" for the nursing staff of the Infirmary.

The training, which is thorough and good, extends over the regulation three years; and the Nurses have courses of lectures such as many large training schools might be envious of.

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